



ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT

2022

In 2022, Fondazione Guido Bernardini finally came back to face-to-face activities, with the organization of the **Third Italian Zebrafish Meeting** and the participation of national and international events such as **Felasa Congress in Marseille** and the **XXVIII Annual Aisal Congress in Trieste**.

On October 2022, for the first time in three years, the Foundation's [Scientific Committee \(SC\)](#) met in-person in the Training Center in Buguggiate. It was an important occasion to discuss and identify the main objectives and strategies in a context deeply changed after the Covid - 19 pandemic.

FGB also maintained and enforced a strong commitment to improve the online offer for education and training. The request of the online courses kept on growing, with participants worldwide and very good feedback from the audience.

FGB courses and scientific events award continuing professional development (CPD) credits by prestigious organizations such as: the **Institute of Animal Technology (IAT)**, the **Swiss Veterinary Association** and the **Royal Society of Biology**. Also during 2022 FGB has maintained its **AALAS Affiliate** Status and membership of the Royal Society of Biology.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

The year started with the first in-person event since 2019, the [Third Italian Zebrafish Meeting \(ZFIM\)](#), organized in Naples, on February 9,10, 11, in collaboration with **University of Naples Federico II** and **Aisal - Associazione Italiana per le Scienze degli Animali da Laboratorio**.

The meeting, attended by 150 participants, highlighted and discussed emerging aspects of zebrafish research. It also aimed at promoting networking among Italian and international researchers.

ZFIM was organized under the patronage of the [European Zebrafish Society](#) and granted by the [Company of Biologists](#). It was also sponsored by six companies in the field of animal equipment, imaging microscopy and animal behaviour tracking software. Senior and junior researchers contributed to the success of the Conference with 39 oral presentations and 44 poster presentations.



TRAINING COURSES

Online course “Cleansing and decontamination: State of the art, innovative approaches, and challenges in laboratory animal facilities” March 16th first edition and May 19th second edition

The one-day online course focused on modern laboratory animal (mainly rodents) facilities and was designed to provide the participants with concepts of cleaning, decontamination and the main difference between disinfection, pasteurization, sanitization and sterilization. The discussion focused not only on the current state of the art solutions but also on the challenges and new possible solutions for cleansing and decontamination procedures. The course raised a lot of interests among facility managers and technicians and, considering the request, a second edition was organized in May.

Online course “Managing a gnotobiotic rodents facility: tools and challenges”, April 27th

The one-day online course focused on the key aspects of the microbiota of laboratory rodents. The speakers provided very practical information on how to approach, manage and monitor a gnotobiotic facility. The course was addressed to Facility and unit managers and supervisors,

veterinarians, persons responsible for overseeing the welfare and care of animals, quality assurance managers, animal technologists, senior technicians.

Online course *What you should know about your rodent facility*, September 28- 29

The two-day online course, designed to provide the key aspects for the management of a modern laboratory rodent facility, with a particular focus on IVC systems, responds to the request of Facility and unit managers and supervisors, veterinarians, quality assurance managers, animal technologists, senior technicians.

Online course *Intensive course on experimental design and biostatistics*, October 7 and 14

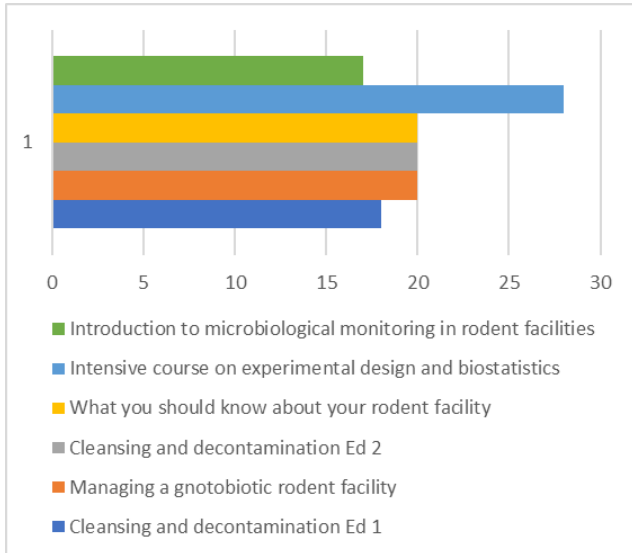
Currently, the scientific literature is critical of the translatability of *in vivo* research results and of the reproducibility of research conducted with animals. There are certainly solutions on what should be done to improve the translatability and reproducibility of animal experiments. Among the solutions, statistics and experimental design play a central role to reach better translatability and reproducibility, in addition to contribute to the Reduction arm of the ThreeRs. The two-day online course addressed the central question of how to design your experiments and which test to perform given your specific research questions. This course offered lectures, exercises and discussions on these topics.

Online course *Introduction to microbiological monitoring in rodents' facilities*, November 17th

A two-day online course designed to provide the participants with key concepts of the microbiological monitoring of laboratory rodents and their environment. The program included an overview on traditional and emerging pathogenic agents, the description of different screening techniques for animals and biologicals. In addition, the necessary assessments in relation to the factors that influence the approach of the screening plan, from the housing system in use to the identification of the microbiological unit was discussed. An open session provided opportunities to discuss the practical challenges related to the management of a microbiological monitoring program.

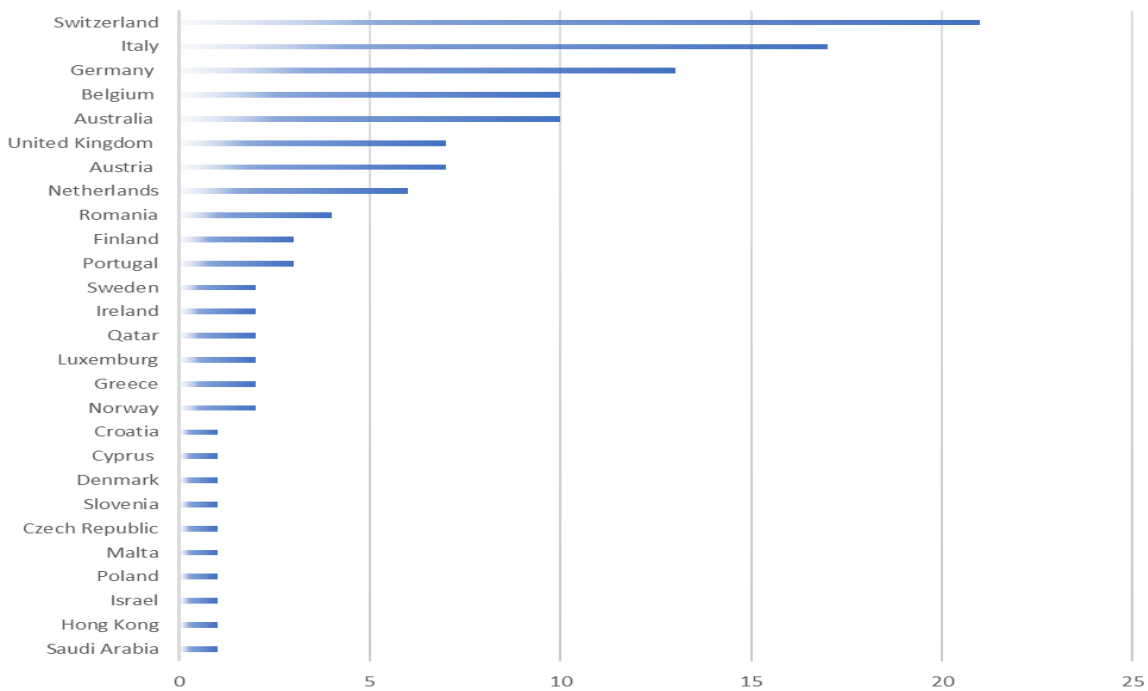
Online training courses participants' profile & feedback

2022 Online courses: 123 participants, 6 online courses



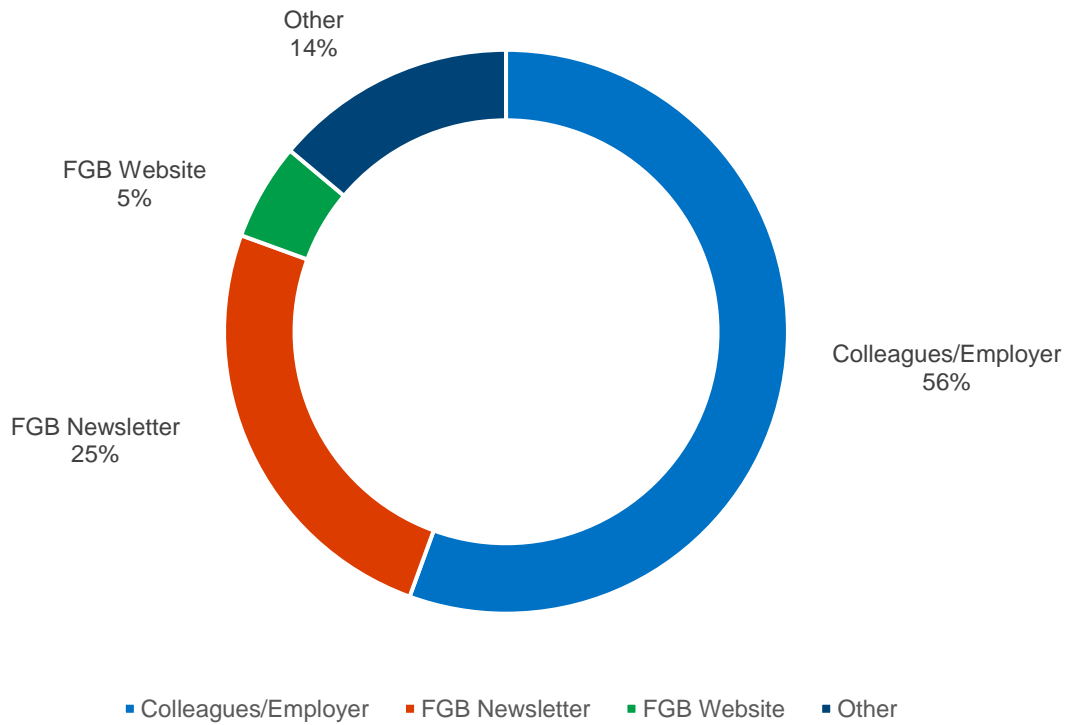
FGB Online courses were addressed to a limited number of students, in order to foster attendants' participation and involvement during the training.

2022 Online courses: nationalities of attendees

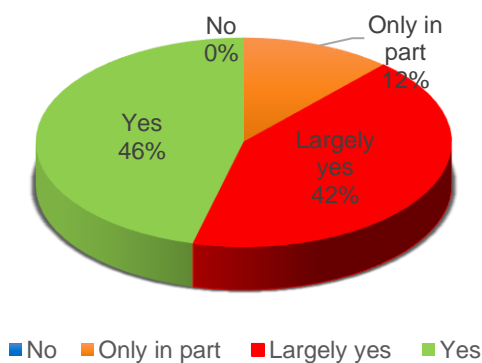


Feedback

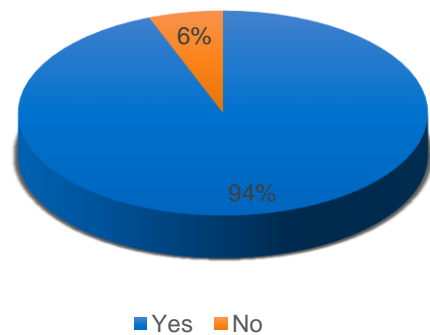
How did you know about the course?



The course met your expectations?



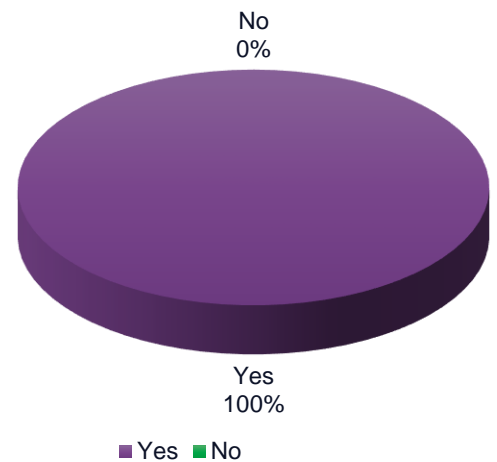
Would you recommend this course to your colleagues?



What did you like most?

- Experienced speakers from the field
- The topic chosen by FGB
- The content is well organised and focused on practical situations.
- Variety of speakers on different topics
- The practical aspects presented
- The topic coverage and time allocated to Q&A

Would you attend future FGB courses?



FUTURE INITIATIVES

In 2023, new editions of the main training courses are scheduled beside new initiatives aimed at deepening the knowledge of relevant topics such as experimental design and new approach methods.

Below the list of training courses already scheduled:

2023 FGB Calendar, 1st semester	
<i>Online course</i> Managing a gnotobiotic rodents' facility: tools and challenges	February 2
<i>In person course</i> Optimising the running of studies	February 28
<i>Virtual Conference</i> "The multifaced universe of alternative methods in day-to-day experimental work"	March 1st
<i>Online Course</i> "Cleansing and decontamination"	March 15
<i>Online course</i> "What you should know about your rodent facility"	May 17-18

PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

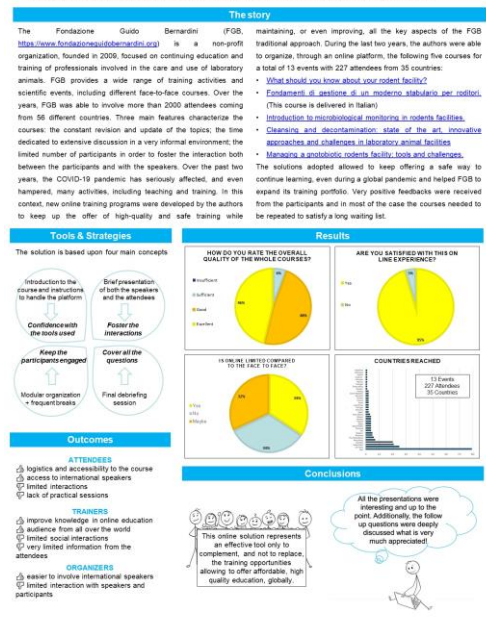
FGB was present with a booth to the FELASA meeting in Marseille in June; it was a great opportunity to meet old friends and to establish new relationships with all those interested in Foundation’s training initiatives.



Adapting training structure during the COVID-19 pandemic: the experience of Fondazione Guido Bernardini.

Federica Baldin¹, Gianpaolo Milite², Francesco Caru³ and Alberto Gobbi⁴

¹Fondazione Guido Bernardini, Milan, Italy, ²Cognosoft, Milan, Italy, ³Scientific Consultant, Udine, Italy, ⁴Academy Nerviano, Italy



Federica Baldin from FGB presented a Poster “Adapting training structure during the COVID-19 pandemic: the experience of Fondazione Guido Bernardini”. It was a great opportunity to share the activity and the methodology adopted by Fondazione Guido Bernardini during the last three years.

FGB was also present with a booth at the XXVIII AISAL Congress, that took place in Trieste on September 29 and 30. It was an important opportunity to strengthen the Italian network and gain insights of Italian scientific community needs and interests.

Updates were regularly distributed by internet to FGB mailing list and published on relevant associations’ web sites.

FGB Mailing list was further expanded and FGB website (www.fondazioneguidobernardini.org) was constantly updated to better fulfil the need of an efficient and timely spread of information.

As usually, an advertisement was published in on LAB Animal Buyers' Guide.

SPONSORSHIPS & PARTNERSHIPS

In line with the mission of promoting scientific training and networks, FGB supported the start-up of [EALAS](#), European Academy of Laboratory Animal Surgery, a new scientific international association of professionals working to promote high standards of surgical and aseptic practice across all species and disciplines.

FGB provided both financial and organizational support, hosting in the cisco Webex platform the first two EALAS webinars:

- ✓ December 6th “*Developing new surgical models part 1: focus on surgery*”, Bertrand Lussier
- ✓ December 13th “*Developing new surgical models part 2: focus on peri-operative care*”, Kate Reid

The webinars attracted a very large audience (more than 200 participants) from all Europe.

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

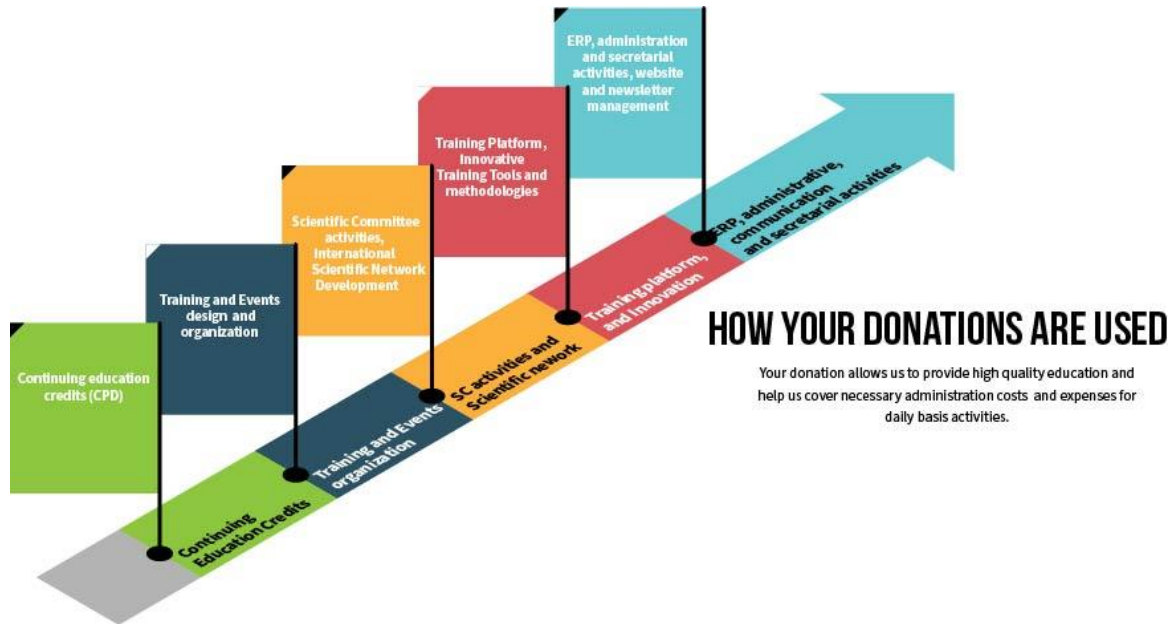
All members of [Scientific Committee](#), composed of distinguished representatives of the international laboratory animal and academic community, confirmed their intention to join the Foundation for the 2022/23. The Scientific Committee plays a fundamental role in ensuring the scientific excellence of educational and scientific programs.

During 2022 the Scientific Committee focused on training methods analysis, considering the needs of the scientific community and the growing training offer.

Four members of SC created a working group on training methods and techniques: main goals are improving participants engagement during the training, fostering scientific and technical networks and implementing assessment for learning.

DONORS SUPPORT

In 2022 Donors contributions were essential to carry on daily activities and to improve the quality of the training offer.



FGB is grateful to its donors: their continuous support makes possible to accomplish FGB mission and goals.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

In 2022 Fondazione Guido Bernardini gradually came back to in person activities, but also kept on improving and delivering online training courses. This was a first step towards a development of a blended offer, based on scientific community needs and on the evaluation of specific learning objectives and most effective methodologies.

In 2023 the current programmes will be updated as usual, and FGB will go forward with its strategic plan, by promoting new topics such new approach methods, experimental design, environmental enrichment and managing resources in a modern animal facility.

FGB was present with its booth at the FELASA meeting in Marseille in June and at AISAL meeting in September: it was a great opportunity to meet old friends and to establish new relationships.

In 2023 FGB will stick with its objective of collaborating with associations and organizations involved in the education and training of LAS: the first step will be a joint event with [Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell'Abruzzo e del Molise 'G. Caporale' \(IZS-Teramo\)](#) on alternative methods and experimental design (February 28 – March 1st , 2023).